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What is the **PURPOSE** of **Baptism?**

Part 2



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Baptism and the Greek of Matthew 28:19-20 [Part 2]

Dave Miller, Ph.D.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen" (Matthew 28:19-20).

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Part I of this two-part series appeared in the September issue. Part II follows below, and continues, without introductory comments, where the second article ended. Both articles are taken from AP's soon-to-be released book *Baptism & the Greek Made Simple*.]

THE GREEK PREPOSITION *EIS*

ANOTHER grammatical factor in Matthew 28:19-20 concerns the occurrence of the preposition *eis* in the phrase "baptizing them in (*eis*) the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (ESV). The standard meaning of the underlying Greek preposition connotes "into" and is generally distinguished from the preposition *en* ("in"). The translation of "into" is given in the American Standard Version, the margin of the English Standard Version, and others (e.g., Beck, Weymouth, et al.).

While it is true that *eis* and *en* are etymologically related and sometimes even interchanged,¹ they are not synonymous. In his classic work on the Greek idiom of the New Testament, C.F.D. Moule (leading scholar of the New Testament, Professor of Divinity at Cambridge for 25 years) noted that "where *en* = *in*, *eis* would rather = *into*," and contrasted with *pros*, "*eis* tends to include the idea of *entry*."² Nigel Turner observed that Matthew "is more careful than any NT author to preserve the distinction between *eis* and *en*."³ A.T. Robertson insisted that in its use of *eis* in Matthew 28:19, "the notion of sphere is the true one."⁴ In his volume on Greek syntax, Nigel Turner insists that even with potential confusion between the two prepositions, "in Mt...we can always presume that *eis* has its full sense even where one might suspect that it stood for *en* (e.g., Mt 28¹⁹ baptism *into* the name,

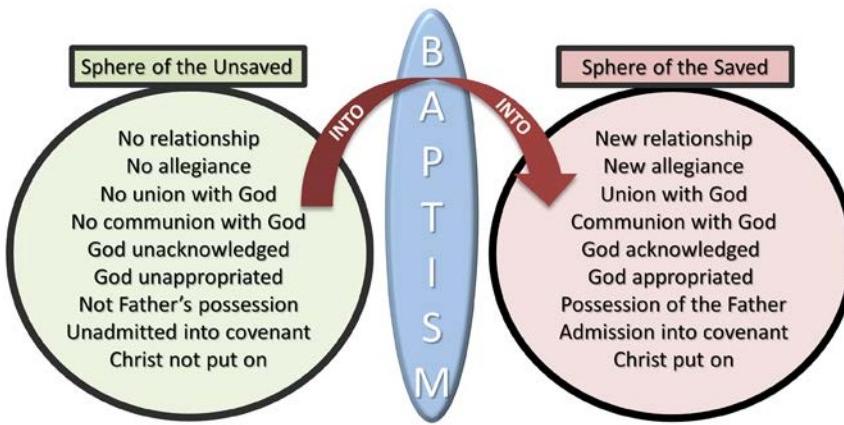
i.e. a relationship as the goal of baptism)."⁵ R.T. France agrees: "The *eis* which introduces the baptismal formula in Matt 28:19 and in most of the other NT baptism texts is perhaps to be understood as drawing attention to the new relationship and allegiance into which the one baptized is thus introduced"⁶—implying entrance into an allegiance.⁷

Marvin Vincent was a Presbyterian minister and professor of New Testament Exegesis and Criticism at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. In his multi-volume work *Word Studies in the New Testament*, Vincent provides this somewhat lengthy commentary on *eis* in Matthew 28:19—

Rev., correctly, "into the name." Baptizing into the name has a twofold meaning. 1. *Unto*, denoting *object* or *purpose*.... 2. *Into*, denoting *union* or *communion* with.... Baptizing into the name of the Holy Trinity implies a spiritual and mystical union with him.... When one is baptized into the name of the Trinity, he professes to acknowledge and appropriate God in all that he is and in all that he does for man.⁸

The *Abingdon Bible Commentary* notes: "Baptizing into the name of means baptizing them so that they are entered as the possession of the Father."⁹ Alford offers a comparable assessment: "It is unfortunate again here that our English Bibles do not give us the force of this εἰς. It should have been *into*.... It imports, not only a *subjective recognition* hereafter by the child of the truth implied in *to onoma* ["the name"—DM]..., but an *objective admission* into the covenant of Redemption—a *putting on of Christ*."¹⁰ Milligan described the shift as "our transfer from the

Summary of *Eis* in Matthew 28:19



kingdom of darkness **into** the Kingdom or Church of Christ.”¹¹

Summary: Though these linguistic experts vary in their terminology, they are unanimous in their recognition of the significance of *eis* in Matthew 28:19 as it relates to the **design** of baptism. A person has not entered into a new relationship and allegiance with God, or come into union or communion with God, or gained admission into the covenant of redemption, or put on Christ, and is not a possession of the Father (different ways to say the same thing) **until** the act of baptism. [See graphic above.] Use of the Greek preposition “into” indicates that when one is baptized in water, the individual is being transferred from one sphere or realm into another, from not having a relationship with deity into having one. Hence, water immersion is unmistakably the dividing line between the lost and the saved, the unforgiven and the forgiven, the non-Christian and the Christian.

THE GREEK NOUN *ONOMA*

ANOTHER nuance in Matthew 28:19-20 to be considered is the occurrence of the term *onoma*

Jesus” means “according to his will and instruction.”¹² Specifically, in Matthew 28:19, “The literal meaning is that baptism symbolically¹³ assigns the person baptized to Christ **for forgiveness of sins.**”¹⁴ W.E. Vine, English biblical scholar and theologian, defined *onoma* in its use in Matthew 28:19 as “in recognition **of the authority of** (sometimes combined with the thought of relying or resting on).”¹⁵ A.T. Robertson cited the use of *onoma* in Matthew 28:19 as another example where “name” has “the idea of ‘**the authority of**’”¹⁶—“a common one in the Septuagint and the papyri for **power or authority.**”¹⁷ Joseph Thayer was a biblical scholar, late Professor of sacred literature at Andover Seminary and Professor of New Testament Criticism in the Harvard Divinity School, who served as a member of the American Bible Revision Committee resulting in the American Standard Version, and also produced an influential Greek lexicon at the time. Delineating one usage of *onoma* as “chiefly Hebraistic,” Thayer explains the meaning of

(“name”) in the phrase “baptizing them in the name (*onoma*) of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (ESV). While the term has a variety of shades of meaning in usage, “in the name of” frequently is used in Scripture as a parallel expression to “by **the power or authority of**” (e.g., Act 4:7). Hans Bietenhard, Swiss Reformed theologian and Professor of New Testament at the University of Bern, noted that the formula “in the name of

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Matthew 28:19 as, “by baptism to bind any one to recognize and publicly acknowledge the **dignity and authority** of one.”¹⁸ He defines *baptidzo* with *eis onoma* as “to profess the name of one whose follower we become.”¹⁹ Referring back to verse 18, Meyer keys into this notion of authority and notes that “all nations should be brought under **His government**, and made subject to His sway.”²⁰ Boles well notes the significance of “name”:

The name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit means the **combined authority of the Godhead**. To be baptized into this is to be brought by baptism into **actual subjection to the combined authority of heaven**. To be baptized into the name of these three **brings one into covenant relation** with the Godhead.²¹

Submitting to authority is closely related to the notion of submitting one’s self to the ownership of another in order to become his possession, as noted by Crain: “The phrase ‘into the name of’ indicates becoming the possession of the triune God.”²² F.F. Bruce agrees:

I suggest that *eis to onoma* implies a **transference of ownership**.... This is noteworthy in the baptismal formulae of the New Testament: baptism “into the name” of the Triune God (Matt. 28:19), or “into the name of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 8:16; 19:5; cf. I Cor. 1:13,15), is the sign [indicator—DM] that He is Lord and that the **baptized person belongs to Him.**²³

Similarly, James Moulton, British philologist and professor of Classical Greek and other languages at the University of Manchester, and George Milligan, biblical scholar and Kimmer at Warwick University, made the following remarks concerning Matthew 28:19—

The phrase **eis (to) onoma tinos** is frequent in the papyri with reference to payments made “to the account of any one”.... The usage is of interest in connexion with Mt 28:19, where the meaning would seem to be “baptized into the **possession of the Father, etc.**”²⁴

Likewise Alexander Souter similarly explained: “When the preposition εἰς with a noun in the accus. follows, it appears to indicate that through this ceremony the baptized person **becomes the property** of the person indicated after εἰς.”²⁵ The classic lexicon most recently revised by Frederick Danker says that “into the name” means that “[t]hrough baptism... those who are baptized become the possession of and come under the dedicated protection of the one whose name they bear.”²⁶

A. Lukyn Williams, English New Testament scholar at Cambridge and Principal of Moore Theological College in New South Wales, explained that the translation of “in” came from the influence of the Latin Vulgate “which does not give the right force to the expression.”²⁷ Instead, the use of *eis*

signifies into **the power and influence of the Holy Trinity**, into faith in the three Persons of God, and the duties and privileges consequent on that faith, into the family of God and obedience unto its Head. The “into” shows the end and aim of the consecration of baptism.... So being baptized into the Name of God implies **being placed in subjection to and communion with God himself, admitted into covenant with him.**²⁸

Seventeenth-century biblical commentator Matthew Poole explained “in the name” as meaning “in the **authority**, or...into the **profession**

of the trinity of the persons in the one Divine Being...obliging them to worship and serve God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”²⁹

Meyer explains:

Here, where the *baptidzein eis to onoma* is regarded as that through which the *mathetuein* is operated, and through which, accordingly, the **introduction into spiritual fellowship with**, and ethical dependence upon Christ is brought about, it must be understood as denoting that by baptism the believer passes into that new phase of life in which he accepts the *name of the Father (of Christ) and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit as the sum of his creed and confession.*³⁰

Observe, again, that all of these scholars are in essential agreement as to the **design** of baptism as it relates to the use of “name” in Matthew 28:19. Whether the significance pertains to transference of **ownership** of the baptized individual, or thereby becoming a **possession** of God, or being placed in **subjection to and communion with God**, or being **admitted to His covenant**, or being introduced into **spiritual fellowship with Him**, the design of baptism remains the same. Barnes summarizes:

So to be baptized in the name of the Father, or unto the Father, means publicly, by a significant rite, to receive his system of religion; to bind the soul to obey his laws; to be devoted to him; to receive, as the guide and comforter of the life, his instructions, and to trust to his promises. To be baptized unto the Son, in like manner, is to receive him as the Messiah—our Prophet, Priest, and King—to submit to his laws, and to receive him as a Saviour.³¹

SUMMARY

DRAWING together the linguistic insights generated by these two features of the Greek, observe that “baptizing them in (*eis/into*) the name (*onoma/authority*) of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” refers to the transference of the individual into the sphere of the authority of deity. As McGarvey observed:

The name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit means the **combined authority** of all the manifestations of God. To be baptized into this, is to be **brought by baptism into actual subjection to it**. He that is baptized is brought into subjection by **that act** to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.³²

While deity actually wields authority over the entire Universe (cf. vs. 18; Ephesians 1:21; Colossians 1:15ff.), no human has willingly placed himself under that jurisdiction or submitted to that authority **until** he submits to water immersion. A person submits himself to the authority of the Godhead when, having been taught the Gospel generating faith, repentance, and oral confession, he then is baptized into that sphere of authority. Conversely, until a person enacts the divinely designated means by which a person places himself under God’s authority, he remains under the authority and power of Satan. Ownership has not been transferred to deity.

CONCLUSION

MATTHEW 28:19-20 teaches that a person is neither a **disciple of Christ**, nor in submission to the **authority of God**, **until** that person has been baptized in water. The unsaved person **must** pass through the waters of baptism

in order to become a disciple of Christ and submit himself to the authority of deity. As British Baptist G.R. Beasley-Murray stated emphatically: “In the New Testament... baptism is conversion-baptism. Conversion was **fulfilled** and expressed in baptism. **Baptism was conversion**...assumed in the Missionary Commission of Matt. xxviii. 18-20.”³³ Or as Schlatter explained: “The apostolic preaching **culminated** in the offer of baptism; the primitive sermon was a baptismal sermon. Its purpose was not merely the acceptance of an idea: **it demanded a definite act.**”³⁴ The person who thinks he became a Christian,³⁵ a disciple of Christ, and was saved the moment he “believed” in Jesus—before and without being baptized—was mistaken and did not become a disciple of Christ in accordance with Jesus’ own directive.

ENDNOTES

¹ Scholars have debated endlessly the nuances of meaning to be found in the parallel expressions “in the name,” “on the name,” and “into the name.” While it makes sense to permit each preposition to maintain its own usual, central thrust and thereby convey a variety of nuances, so far as this study is concerned, it is enough to note that the **design** of each is the same, i.e., to demonstrate the altered status of the individual from lost to saved, from non-Christian to Christian. *Eis* vividly portrays this transference. Cf. C.F.D. Moule (1977 reprint), *An Idiom-Book of New Testament Greek* (New York: Cambridge University Press), second edition, p. 50; F.J. Foakes Jackson and Kirsopp Lake (1933), *The Beginnings of Christianity: The Acts of the Apostles* (London: Macmillan),

p. 124—“A convert knew perfectly well that when he said that he had been baptized in the name of Jesus he meant that someone had said ‘I baptize you in the name of Jesus’ or something similar, and that **in consequence he had attained the way of salvation.**”

² p. 67, italics in orig.; cf. Nigel Turner (1963), *Syntax*, in *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, ed. James Moulton (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark), 3:254.

³ Nigel Turner (1976), *Style*, in *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, ed. James Moulton (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark), 4:42. Carson agrees with this observation: “Matthew... apparently avoids the confusion of *eis* (strictly ‘into’) and *en* (strictly ‘in’) common in Hellenistic Greek; and if so, the preposition ‘into’ strongly suggests a **coming-into-relationship-with** or a **coming-under-the-Lordship-of....** It is a sign both of **entrance into Messiah’s covenant community** and of **pledged submission to his lordship**” (p. 597, emp. added).

⁴ 1934, p. 592.

⁵ 1963, 3:255, italics in orig., emp. added.

⁶ R.T. France (2007), *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans), p. 1116, italics in orig., emp. added.

⁷ France, 1985, p. 414.

⁸ Marvin Vincent (1946 reprint), *Word Studies in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans), 1:149-150, italics in orig.

⁹ Eiselen, p. 995, italics in orig., emp. added; also Alan M’Neile (1965), *The Gospel According to St. Matthew* (New York: St. Martin’s Press), p. 436.

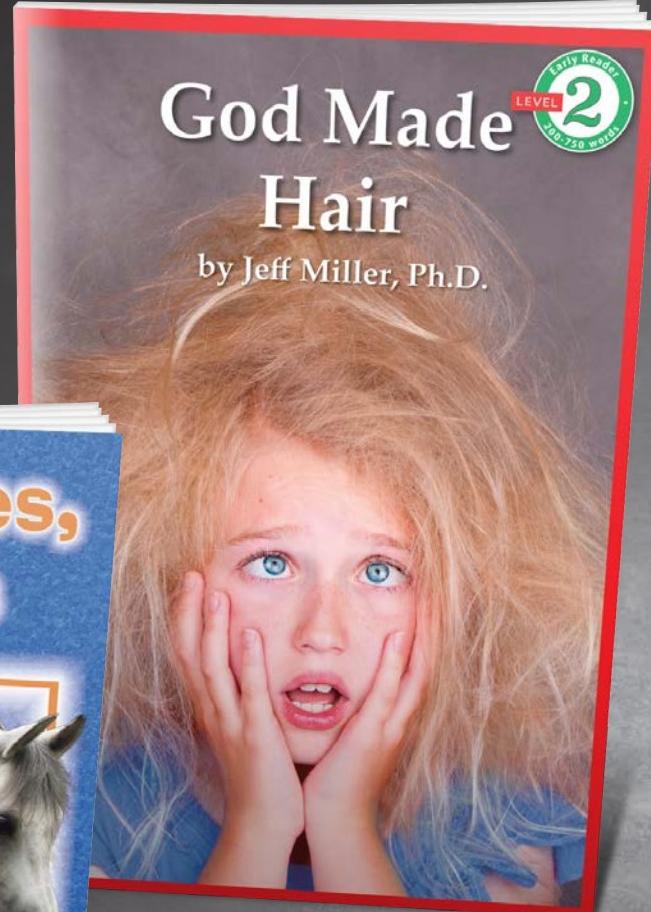
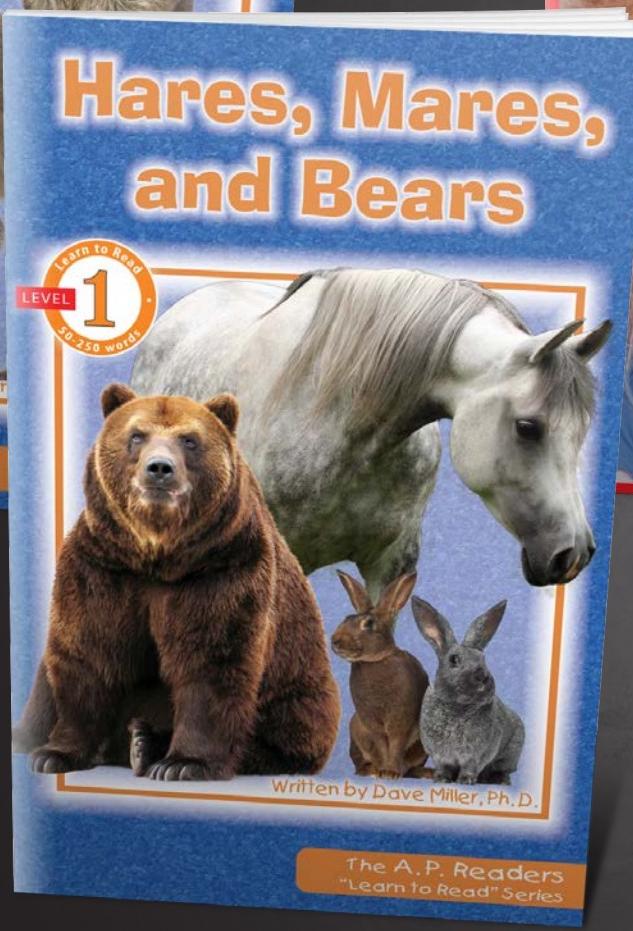
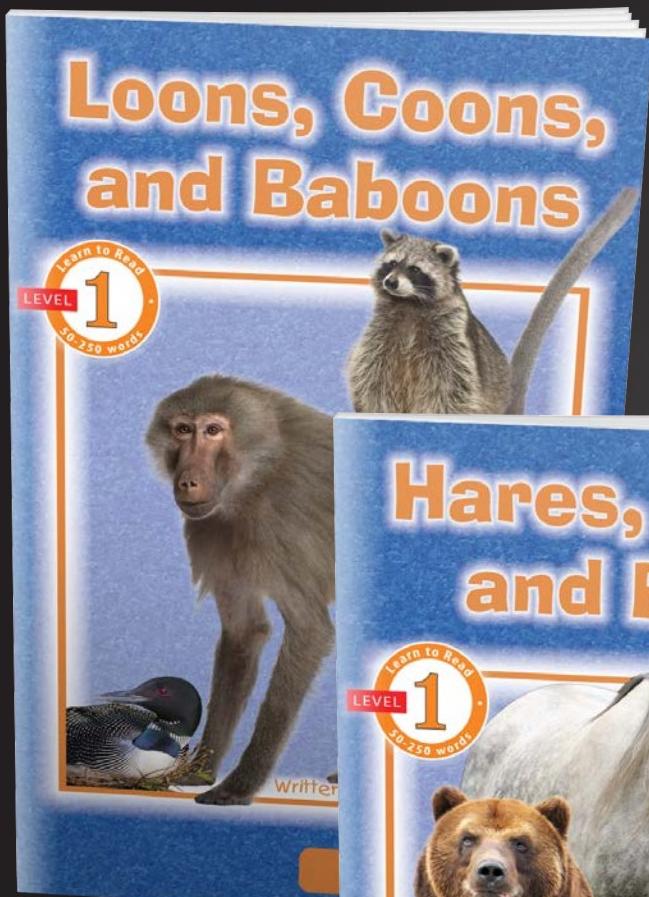
¹⁰ Alford, 1:307, italics in orig., 2nd emp. added.

¹¹ Robert Milligan (1975), *Exposition and Defense of the Scheme of Redemption* (Nashville, TN: Gospel Advocate), p. 405.

¹² Hans Bietenhard (1976), “*onoma*,”

(cont. on p. 116)

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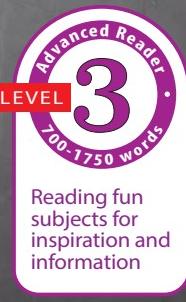
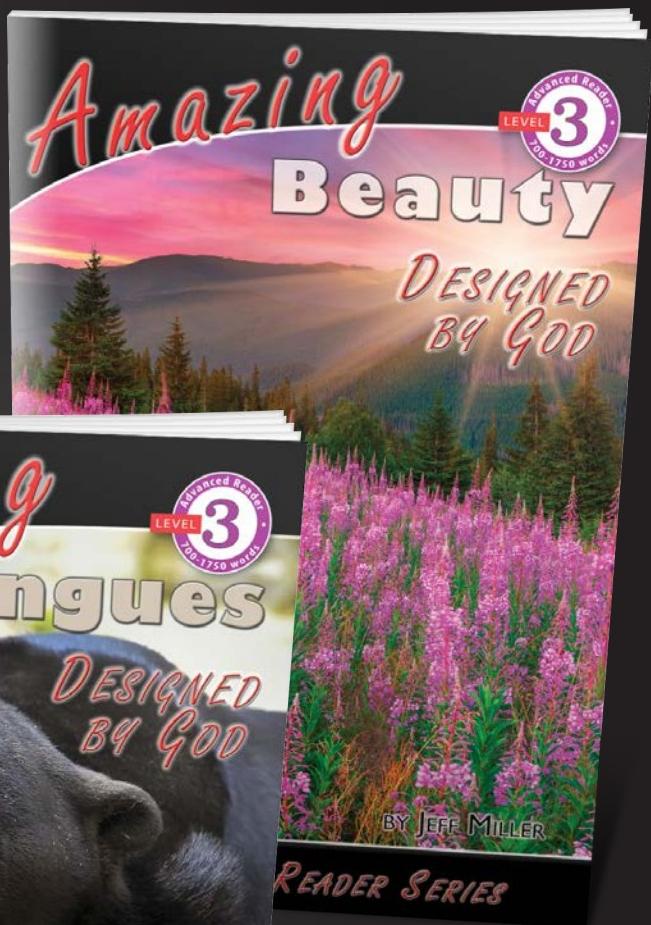
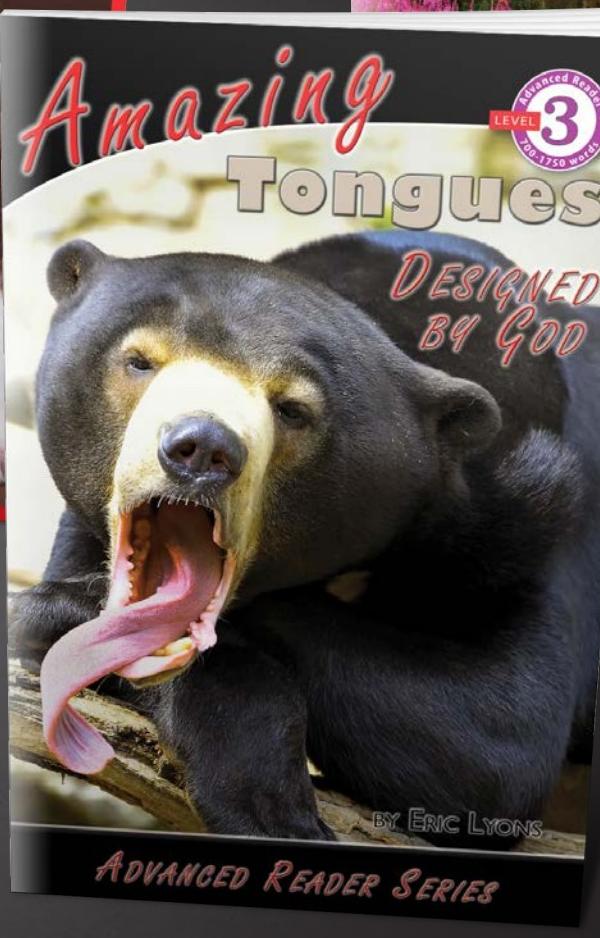
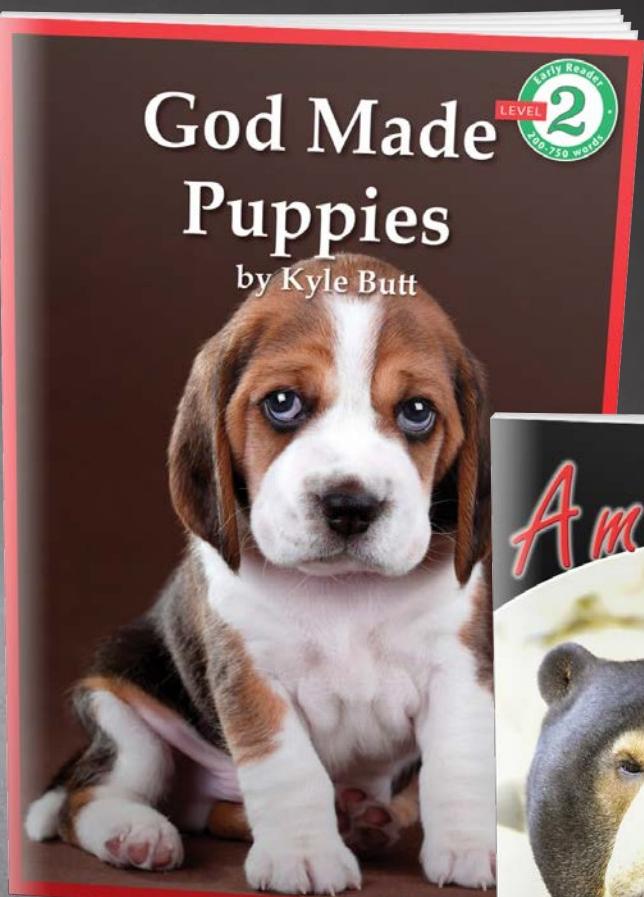
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The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 2:654.

¹³ Observe that the insertion of the word “symbolically” constitutes subjective interpretation rather than objective linguistic analysis. The same may be said for the theory that maintains that, since a person already has received the saving grace of God by which sins have been cleansed the moment he believes, then baptism serves the purpose of providing an **outward** demonstration or public declaration that the person has **already** been saved. The claim is that baptism is a **symbol**—a visible expression of the forgiveness already received at the point of faith. Hence, baptism is “an outward sign of an inward grace,” a post-conversion “testimony” or “public profession” that the person is already saved, like a “badge” or “uniform” worn by a policeman—merely an outward indication of what the wearer has already become. For example, after praising Mantey’s “causal” *eis* concept, Kenneth Wuest states: “Thus, we have the scriptural meaning of water baptism. **It is the testimony of the person to the fact of his salvation.** The only proper recipient of water baptism therefore is one who has received the Lord Jesus as his personal Saviour, and is trusting in His precious blood for salvation from sin”—(1943), *Treasures from the Greek New Testament for the English Reader* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans), p. 78, emp. added. The only problem with such theologizing is that the New Testament makes no distinction between **actual** forgiveness and an alleged post-salvation “**symbolical**” forgiveness. If a person is forgiven, it would be superfluous to “symbolize” that forgiveness after-the-fact. Once a person dismisses the plain and self-evident import of the New

Testament’s repetitive declaration that baptism is for the remission of sins, it follows that he must invent an alternative purpose for baptism. The “symbol,” “testimony,” “picture,” and “badge” concepts are undoubtedly creative and as good as any that might be fabricated to avoid the obvious fact that the New Testament posits remission of sin **coincident** with water baptism and not before. The only problem is that no shred of biblical evidence, grammatical or otherwise, exists to substantiate them. Baptist scholar J.W. Willmarth rightly asked: “Where is the example of the use of *εἰς* to denote a relation between an act as a symbol and some past event or accomplished fact, which such symbol is intended to set forth as emblem or declaration or commemoration?” “If it be but a MERE symbol, or object lesson, or a profession of accomplished facts, what meaning is there in language? or how shall we ever hope to understand the Gospel, as it fell from inspired lips, clothed with human words?”—J.W. Willmarth (1877), “Baptism and Remission,” *The Baptist Quarterly*, ed. Henry Weston (Philadelphia, PA: American Baptist Publication Society), July, 11:299,317, capitals in orig. Or as J.W. McGarvey explained: “It is a common assumption that Saul’s sins had been *really* forgiven before his immersion, and Ananias required him only to *formally* wash them away. But this is a mere combination of words to hide the absence of an idea. How can a man *formally* do a thing which has already been *really* done, unless it be by going through a *form* which is empty and deceptive? If Saul’s sins were already washed away, then he *did not* wash them away in immersion, and the language of Ananias was deceptive. But it is an indisputable fact, that at the time Ananias gave him this command

he was still unhappy, and, therefore, unforgiven. Immediately after he was immersed, he was happy; and the change took place in the mean time, which connects it with his immersion”—(1872), *Commentary on Acts of Apostles* (Lexington, KY: Transylvania Printing & Publishing), seventh edition, p. 135, italics in orig. Albrecht Oepke, associate professor and New Testament Chair at the University of Leipzig, in his discussion of “the saving significance of baptism” and its “connection with purification from the guilt of sin,” debunks the “symbol” idea: “The significance of baptism thus depends on the fact that it is a **real action** of the holy God in relation to sinful man. Hence both a superstitious and also a **purely symbolical understanding** are excluded.... To baptism as a mere rite or realistically developed symbol no such incomparable efficacy could be ascribed in the NT world of thought”—from his article “βάπτω, βαπτίζω” in Gerhard Kittel, ed. (1964), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans), 1:540. Or as J.J. Van Oosterzee explained: “Baptism is styled ‘laver of regeneration,’ not because it *obligates* to regeneration, nor because it is the *symbol* of regeneration, but because it is really the *means* of regeneration, if truly desired and received in faith (which is tacitly assumed in respect to those adult Christians who by their own free act were baptized)”—(1870), *The Epistle of Paul to Titus* (New York: Charles Scribner), p. 20, italics in orig.

The premiere passages in the New Testament that assign symbolic value to baptism simply do not expound the post-conversion concept. True, baptism is, indeed, a symbol. **But what does baptism symbolize?** It symbolizes: (1) Christ’s death, burial, and

resurrection, as per Romans 6:3-4; (2) the act of “cutting off” as in circumcision (sin vs. skin), as per Colossians 2:11; and (3) the waters of the Noahic Flood, as per 1 Peter 3:20-21. How could anyone get out of these explicitly stated symbolic meanings that **baptism symbolizes past forgiveness** that was achieved **prior** to being immersed? Jettisoning theological presuppositions enables the honest exegete to conclude that the Bible nowhere expounds a post-forgiveness role for baptism. Quite the contrary, the symbolism which the New Testament explicitly associates with water baptism (i.e., Christ’s burial, cutting of skin, and Flood waters) further verifies the **essentiality** of immersion as a mandatory **prerequisite** to forgiveness. See Dave Miller (2003), “Is Baptism a Symbol?” Apologetics Press, <http://apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?category=11&article=1232&topic=379>.

¹⁴ Bietenhard, 2:655, emp. added.

¹⁵ W.E. Vine (1966 reprint), *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* (Old Tappan, NJ: Revell), p. 100, emp. added; cf. Wesley Perschbacher, ed. (1990), *The New Analytical Greek Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson), p. 294.

¹⁶ 1934, p. 649, emp. added. Paul undoubtedly intended to key into this concept when he chided the Corinthians for their divisive ways by posing three critical questions, the third of which was: “Or were you baptized in (*eis-into*) the name of Paul?” (1 Corinthians 1:13). The question obviously echos Matthew 28:19. Paul sought to prick the Corinthians with the fact that when they were baptized in water, they were placing themselves under (*eis-into*) the authority of Christ—not Paul, Apollos, Cephas, or anyone else.

Observe also that his remarks in 1 Corinthians 1:10-17 further

underscore the absolute essentiality of water baptism to salvation: “For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe’s household, that there are contentions among you. Now I say this, that each of you says, ‘I am of Paul,’ or ‘I am of Apollos,’ or ‘I am of Cephas,’ or ‘I am of Christ.’ **Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?**” (vss. 11-13). What did Paul mean when he used the expression to be “of” someone (“I” [’Eyò] with the genitive of the person)? He alluded to an authoritative positioning of a person beneath another. To be “of” another means to have been saved by and come under the jurisdiction of that other and, hence, to “belong to” (R.C.H. Lenski [1943], *The Interpretation of St. Matthew’s Gospel* [Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg], p. 42; cf. ISV,NRSV,RSV) or “follow” (NIV,CJB,CEV,ESV, GNT,NCV,WEB) that person. This relationship is inherent in the three questions Paul asks the Corinthians—questions that pinpoint **essential prerequisites** to being counted “of” someone. First, in order to be “of” someone, that someone must accordingly be qualified for others to follow him, devote themselves to him, and place themselves under his exclusive rule, Lordship, and control. That person must be “undivided.” To be undivided means that he must have no rivals (e.g., Paul, Apollos, etc.), or competing factions, he must be your sole Savior Who is singular, unique, and unsurpassed by all others. His followers constitute a single body, of which He is the only Head. Hence, the indivisible Christ makes no allowance for other heads, lords, or bodies. He possesses “right over all” (Henry Alford [1874], *Alford’s Greek Testament* [Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1980 reprint], 2:477). Your loyalty

must be directed to Christ alone. Second, that person must be **crucified** for you. Third, you must be **baptized into his name**. As discussed in the section on *onoma*, to be baptized into the name entails submitting oneself to the authority of the one named, or as explained by John Locke, “to enter himself a Disciple of him into whose Name he was baptized, with Profession to receive his Doctrine and Rules, and **submit to his Authority**”—(1751), *A Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul to the Galatians, I&II Corinthians, Romans, and Ephesians* (London: S. Birt, J. Walthoe, et al.), p. 94, emp. added. (Also Macknight, p. 144; Robertson, *Word Pictures*, 4:75).

In view of these realizations, three additional questions are in order: (1) Is Jesus’ unique, indivisible status (i.e., His divine identity) **essential** to salvation? Certainly. (2) Is Jesus’ crucifixion **essential** to salvation? Absolutely. (3) Is baptism in His name **essential** to salvation? If the answer to the first two questions is “yes,” the third must be as well. Since the text, by implication, answers all three of these questions in the affirmative, it further follows that a person is not “of Christ” unless and until he is baptized into His name. Baptism is **so** important to salvation, Paul was glad he had baptized so few, **so that he did not contribute to the division afflicting the Corinthian church**. Due to the divisive climate in the church at Corinth, Paul ran the risk of leaving the impression that baptism was disconnected from salvation in Christ. As Willmarth explained: “lest the faith and reverence due to Christ might be ‘divided’—and a part transferred to the distinguished administrator” (p. 313). “We should note how inseparably connected in Paul’s thought were the sacrifice of the cross and the baptism which makes us partakers

in its benefits”—J.W. McGarvey (1916), *Thessalonians, Corinthians, Galatians and Romans* (Cincinnati, OH: Standard), p. 54. Indeed, as Paul stressed later in the same epistle, the Corinthians had been **baptized** into one body—the **body of Christ** (12:13). Chapter 12:12 is a virtual commentary on the “schisms” (1:10—σχίσματα): “For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.” Even as Christ is undivided, so His body (the church) is to be undivided. Far from minimizing the importance of baptism, or proving that baptism is unessential to salvation, quite the opposite is the case. 1 Corinthians 1:13 proves the **essentiality** of baptism. Without a divine Lord, His crucifixion, and water baptism, **there could be no Christians**. No one could be “of Christ.”

¹⁷ A.T. Robertson (1930), *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press), 1:245, emp. added.

¹⁸ Joseph Thayer (1977 reprint), *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker), p. 447, emp. added.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 94.

²⁰ p. 301, italics in orig., emp. added.

²¹ H. Leo Boles (1952), *The Gospel According to Matthew* (Nashville, TN: Gospel Advocate), pp. 564–565, emp. added. See also Lange (1884), 1:557—“a baptism under the **authority of**, and unto the **authority of** the triune God.” Also G.G. Findlay (no date), *St. Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians in The Expositor’s Greek Testament*, ed. W. Robertson Nicoll (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans), p. 766—“The name’ connotes the nature and **authority** of the bearer.” For more discussion of the concept of authority, see Dave Miller (2012), *Surrendering to His Lordship* (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics

Press).

²² Sellers Crain (2011), *Truth for Today Commentary: Matthew 14–28* (Searcy, AR: Resource Publications), p. 484.

²³ F.F. Bruce (1963), *The Books and the Parchments* (Westwood, NJ: Fleming H. Revell), p. 66, emp. added.

²⁴ James Moulton and George Milligan (1930), *Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-literary Sources* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982 reprint), p. 451, first emp. in orig., second emp. added.

²⁵ Alexander Souter (1917), *A Pocket Lexicon to the Greek New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), p. 46. Souter served as professor of New Testament Greek and Exegesis at Mansfield College, Oxford, and later succeeded William Ramsay as Regius Professor of Humanity at the University of Aberdeen. He published an edition of the New Testament Greek text on which the English Revised Version of 1881 was based (the British precursor to the ASV).

²⁶ Frederick Danker, rev. and ed. (2000), “ὄνομα,” *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press), p. 713.

²⁷ p. 645.

²⁸ Ibid., emp. added.

²⁹ 3:146, emp. added.

³⁰ p. 302, italics in orig., emp. added. Cf. David Schneider (2017), “Reconsidering the Greek Preposition ‘EIS’ in the Baptismal Theology of Matthew 28 and Romans 6,” *Concordia Theology*, <https://goo.gl/6dDhgW>—“Baptized ‘into the name’ pictures the person being transferred from outside God’s name to inside the name—God’s family—with all of the family blessings and responsibilities.”

³¹ p. 323. Cf. Lars Hartman (2013), *Approaching New Testament Texts*

and Contexts: Collected Essays II (Tubingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck), pp. 145ff. See also Murray Harris (1978), “Prepositions and Theology in the Greek New Testament,” in Colin Brown, ed., *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 3:1209, who summarizes three views: “it may denote a transference of ownership” in which “the person being baptized passes into the possession of the Triune God,” or it can denote “to endow a person, through baptism, with the benefits of the salvation accomplished by Jesus Christ,” or “denoting the fundamental reference or purpose of some thing, rite or action.” Observe that all three of these views presuppose that baptism precedes salvation. Cf. Wilhelm Heitmüller (1903), *Im Namen Jesu* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht).

³² J.W. McGarvey (1875), *The New Testament Commentary: Matthew and Mark* (Delight, AR: Gospel Light Publishing), p. 254, italics in orig., emp. added.

³³ G.R. Beasley-Murray (1966), *Baptism Today and Tomorrow* (New York: St. Martin’s Press), pp. 93–94.

³⁴ Adolf von Schlatter (1955), *The Church in the New Testament Period*, trans. Paul Levertoff (London: SPCK Publishing), p. 26.

³⁵ Johannes Lindblom believed that μαθητεύσατε (“make disciples”—DM) could just as rightly be rendered Χριστιανούς ποιήσατε (“make Christians”—DM) in (1919), *Jesu missions-och dopfallning, Matt. 28:18–20, tillika en studie över det kristna dopets ursprung* (Stockholm: Svenska Kyrkans Diakonistyrelses Bokförlag), p. 132.

Christians, Bible Critics, and Truth

Eric Lyons, M.Min.

No one is perfect. No one but God has ever or will ever get everything correct. Indeed, “To err is human.” The real question is, what will a person do once he makes mistakes? Is he honest enough to admit them? Is he humble enough to swallow his pride? Does he really care about the truth, or does the end justify the means?

To the Christian, truth is paramount. Everything about our God is truth, including His Spirit, His Son, His Word, His judgments, etc. (1 John 5:6; John 14:6; Psalm 19:9; 119:142,160). And the Christian’s pursuit is one of truth (John 8:31-36). The **only** “agenda” a Christian should have is whatever **God’s** “agenda” is (i.e., whatever the truthful, omniscient Creator and Savior wants us to be and do, which includes owning up to our mistakes; Luke 18:9-14; Acts 26:20).

When human beings do not acknowledge God and His truthful standard for their lives, deceit eventually rules the day, even though it is often peddled as “truth.” One glaring example of such deceitfulness is seen every day in America in the 21st century: repeated accusations that the Bible is full of discrepancies. Outspoken critics of the Bible’s

supernatural inspiration continue to claim certain Bible passages are contradictory, even though time and again many have heard and seen the passages explained in a clear, logical, and biblically consistent manner. Some skeptics have been in numerous public debates where they made allegations against the Bible writers that were truthfully and logically answered. Yet, the same skeptics continue to repeat the same unproven allegations against the Bible writers in future debates, articles, and books.

FACT: skeptics have sought to undermine confidence in the credibility, historicity, and authenticity of the Bible for 2,000 years. Yet, those who have been “set for the defense of the Gospel” (Philippians 1:17) have successfully answered every challenge with careful analysis of the text of the Bible and demonstrated that the charge was unfounded. The Bible has been shown over and over again to possess the attributes and characteristics of a supernatural production. No alleged discrepancy has gone unanswered. Convincing explanations exist for every allegation ever made.

Why would skeptics continue to cite “contradictory” Bible passages, which at the very least they would have to admit are **unproven** allegations? It would seem for the same reason many in today’s mainstream media continually press certain stories: the end justifies the means. They care more about their own agendas than the truth.

May God help us always to be truthful with ourselves, our God, and our fellow man.

SPEAKING SCHEDULES

Kyle Butt

October 10	Columbia, TN	(931) 388-7334
October 14	Stantonville, TN	(731) 632-4678
October 21	Estill Springs, TN	(931) 596-2649
October 24	Rogersville, AL	(256) 247-3422

Eric Lyons

October 28-31	Woodbridge, VA	(703) 789-1582
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Dave Miller

October 8-10	Van Buren, AR	(479) 474-6527
October 11-12	Brownsville, TX	(956) 459-6793

Jeff Miller

October 10	Huntsville, AL	(256) 895-8717
October 12-14	Bedford, VA	(540) 583-1808
October 19-21	Granby, MO	(417) 325-4203



NOTE FROM *The Editor*



New AP Readers

One of the important areas of activity at Apologetics Press has been the production of materials for children of all ages. We have striven to provide faith-building products that will enable young people to know the truth and not be swayed by the many adverse influences that characterize current culture. The AP Reader Series has been a very effective means to accomplish this objective.

Three levels of readers are available: The "Learn to Read" series is designed to provide books for children (ages 3-6) for the purpose of assisting them in learning to read, while simultaneously introducing them to the Creator and His creation. The Early Reader Series is a set of books aimed at children in kindergarten through second grade. A step up from our Early Readers, A.P.'s Advanced Reader Series is aimed at children in 2nd-3rd grades.

We are pleased to announce the release of two new books in each series. In the Learn to Read



series, we have *Hares, Mares, and Bears* as well as *Loons, Coons, and Baboons*. The two new Early Readers are *God Made Puppies* and *God Made Hair*. For

the Advanced Reader Series, we have *Amazing Tongues* and *Amazing Beauty*. All six of these books will further enhance and reinforce the critical principles of God as Creator, as well as the teleological argument for His existence, based on the incredible design that exists in the world.

Each series now has 10 books. We have always made these volumes available at an extremely low price, with even lower prices when bought in bulk. Please give serious consideration to the value of these books in further insulating the souls of youth.

Dave Miller

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for More Details